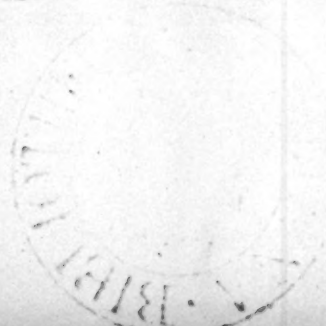
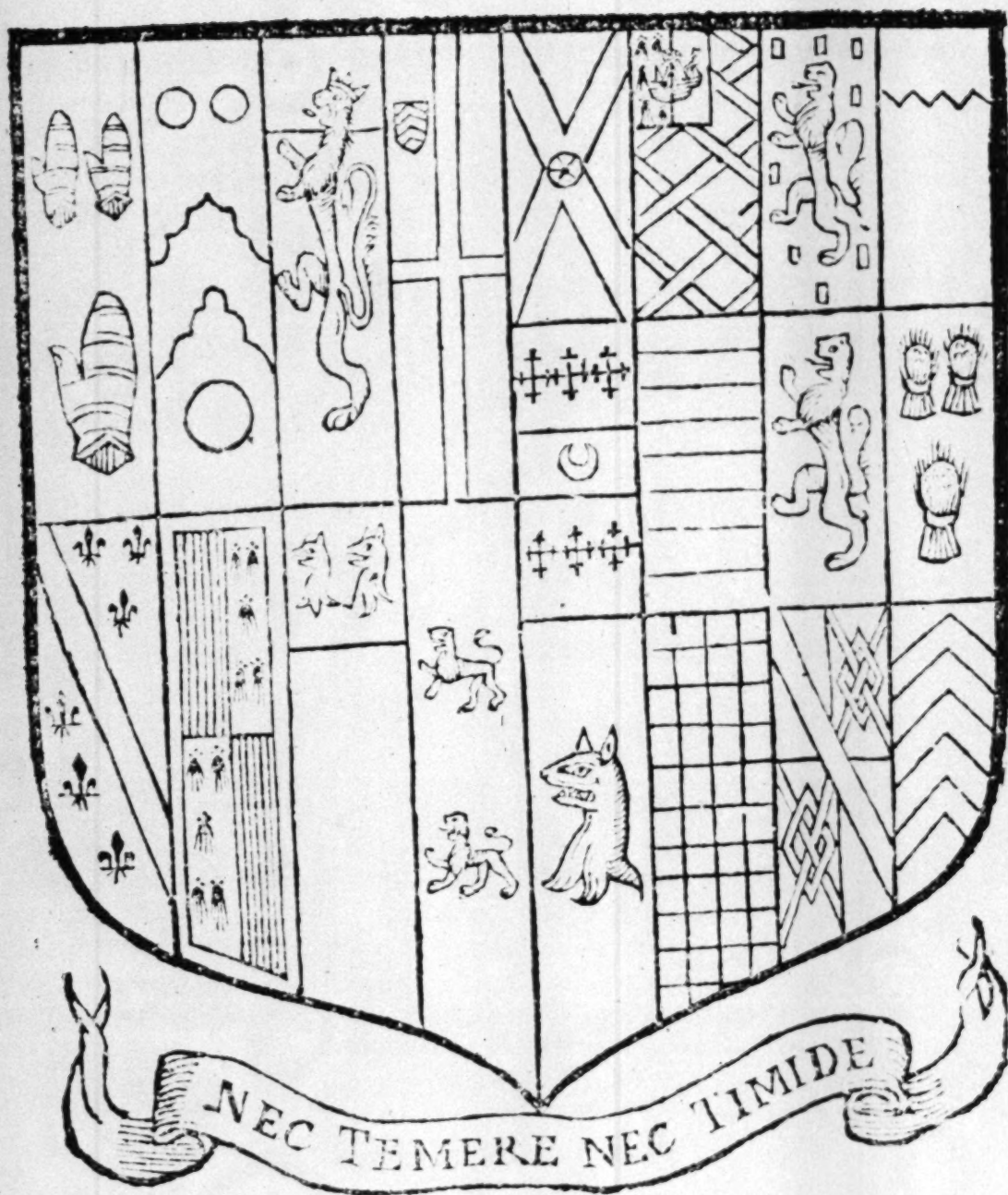


**A** LITTLE  
Pamphlet of Saint Au-  
gustine entitled the Lad-  
der of Paradise. Very worthy  
and needful to be read of e-  
very Christian that is  
willing to tread the  
Steps which lead  
to Salvation.

25-26.

22

Imprinted at London for  
Edward Agas, dwelling in  
Pauls church ward at the  
signe of y<sup>e</sup> red Dragon.  
and are there to  
be sold.



To the right worshipfull La-  
dy, the L. Jane true felicitie  
with the increace of God his moſte  
excellent blessings.



**I**t is not rare but  
vſuall, to ſee gifts bro-  
ught vnto a ritch mā  
and many preſents, ge-  
uē to him that lacketh  
not, verifying that in things earthly,  
vvhich properly is ſpoke of the minde.  
To him that hath it ſhall be giuē & he  
ſhall haue abundāce, euen ſo the abun-  
dance of Gods good gifts, the humble-  
nes of minde, the loue of vertue, and  
zeale of ſeruing God, vvhich I haue  
hard and ſeene in your Ladyſhip hath  
long ſince geuen me great deſire by  
vvytyng ſomvvhāt to ad ſome good  
thing vnto the heape of thoſe good ver-  
tues. But finding in my ſelfe nothing,  
vvhervvith to anſwere my deſire, as  
being voide of learning or vviſdome  
vverthy



## dedicatory.

• worthy to be heard: I became cleere-  
ly resolved to folowve my purpose no  
further, and to end wvith prayer vn-  
to God, that he wvould blesse his gifts  
in you to the encreace of an hundreth  
fold: yet spending some time as my lei-  
sure did serue me in turning the leues  
of that auncient father AVGVSTIN,  
I found this litle Pamphlet, an apt  
peece (as me thought) for that purpose,  
and a Iewell worthy to be wvorne,  
not about the neck: but about the hart  
of the greatest Lord or Lady in this  
wvorld, namely a **S**caire of stayres or a  
ladder of pure golde, so artificially  
wvrought, that wvho so listeth to goe  
there on: shall be sure to come safely vp  
into the presence chamber of Gods e-  
uer lasting glory, and in so small rounge  
this Iuell is cōtrined, that it may wvel  
be placed in the least of all the christi-  
an harts yea and the lesse the hart is:  
the more aptly it may be hidden therein,  
which



## The Epistle

which also for the antiquitie is, a  
hauē eleuen hundred yeere olde, and  
for excellencie the litle worke dooth  
so praise it self that a far better pen the  
myne adding somewhat to the praise  
therof should rather blemish then beau-  
tifie it by saying much lesse, or much  
worse then the same dooth say for it  
selfe, hauing therefore (as I haue said)  
nothing in me to further the loue of  
vertue and zeale of christianitie which  
God hath geuen you, I haue thus ob-  
tained this olde father saint AVGVSTINE  
to doo it for me, whom if it  
shall please your ladyship to hear with  
good affectiō attentively: the paine shall  
sure be much les the the profit, and you  
shal not fail to reap great fruit with  
small trauaile. yea the labour shall soōe  
be gone and the profit long remaine.  
Now what so euer therefore in this  
litle treatis is spoken: I humbly beseech  
your ladyship allway to remember. It

## dedicatory.

Cap. 1.

is not I: but the ancient and excellent father Saint AVGVSTINE that speaketh. It is he that saith, reading, meditation, prayer and contemplation are the steps of that ladder that leadeth to heauen. It is he that expounding the

Cap. 2.

woords of Christe saith, seeke by reading: and ye shall finde by meditation, knock by praying: and it shall be opened vnto you by contemplation. It is he that saith, reading dooth as it were

Ibidem.

Cap. 11.

apply substāciall meat vnto the mouth, meditatio dooth chooue it & break it, prater obtaineth the sweetnes of it: contemplation is the sweetnes it self. It is Saith AVGVSTINE that saith, reading vwith out meditation is suples, & meditation vwith out reading is erroneus. And lest some fond body should imagi, that this reding vwhich hee so oft speaketh of, should be the reading of any other thing but of Scripture only, and that vwith these

Cap. 1.

woords

## The Epistle.

words: reading (saith he) is a looking upon the scripture with a diligent entention of the minde, and in the tenth chapter, he saith these foure Cap. 10. steps are so linked together, that they which goe before without them which folow: can profit little or nothing & they which folow without them that goe before: doe profite doe or neuer. To conclude, the whole somme & effect therof: is nothing els but that the reading of Scripture, the meditation vpon the Scripture, prayer to obtain the vnderstanding of Scripture, and contemplatiō in the sweetnes of Gods promises contained in the Scripture is the onely gate of Heauen, and the way to attain eternal life. For the cōfirmatiō vtherof: it were no hard matter for a man of mean knowledge to cōpile a huge volume, and to bring many hundred places out of the auncient fathers, vtherin they plainly



## dedicatory.

Deut. 17.  
ver. 18. 19.

plainly and directly confirm the same, that by these steps onely, & none other way: a man must goe to beauen. But moſte of all it ought to mooue vs that God him ſelf by his owne word hath ratified this to be the only way to Heauen, and that for all men, without any exception. For who can haue greater priuiledge then a King? or greater occaſion to ſurceaſſe from the continuall exerciſe of this reading, meditation, prayer and cōtemplation?

Jos. 1. vii.

And is it not expreſſy ſet down by Gods cōmaūdemēt, that a King ought to haue the book of Gods lawes by hī, and ought to read therein all the dayes of his life? who ſhould ſooner be exempt frō this ailigent exerciſe of Scripture then a Souldier or Captain, and that durīg the vvarres? But dooth not God him ſelf ſpeak vnto the noble Conqueror & captā, Joſua in the firſt ētre of his vwarres, and ſtraightly charge him?

## dedicatory.

him sayinge Let not the book of this  
lawe departe out of thy mouth, but  
occupy thy minde therin day & night.  
VWhere mark these precise termes,  
Book, mouth, minde, day, night. For  
vwho seeth not that vpo euery of these  
vvords much might be said if breuitie  
vvould suffer it. VWhen or at vwhat  
time should any intermission frō the  
exercise of Scripture be graunted to  
any man, if it be cōuenient for a noble  
man traouailing by the vvay in his iour-  
ney to read the Scriptures? And did  
not the noble Lord Tresurer of the  
great Queene Candace traouailing by  
the vvay, sit in his Chariot treading of  
Esayas the Prophet? & vvas not the  
end therof saluation of his soule?. Is  
it not also vvrittē by Saint Luke for  
an euerlasting commendation vn-  
to those that vv ere the noblest of birth  
among them of Thessalonica, because  
(vvhen Paule had preached) they ser-  
B. ched

Iosn. 1.  
ver. 8.

Act. 8.  
ver. 30.

Act. 17.  
ver. 11.

## The Epistle

shed the Scriptures, and that dayly to see whether it were so or not? And by that meanes they were brought vnto the faith of Christe. Yea and not noble men only, but Ladies also by nāe are appointed of God to tread these steps, and they shall neuer come to heauen other wise then by reading the scriptures, by meditation of the scriptures, by praier to vnderstand them, & contemplation in the sweetnes of them.

2. Joh. 1.  
ver. 1.

And therefore Saint Iohn writeth one of his epistles vnto a Lady, that Ladies also hauing the woord of God so especially dyrected vnto them, might endeuour theselues with the greter dyligēce to read it and certēly know themselves not to be excluded frō the exercise therof.

Pro. 10.

The wisdom of GOD in the last chapter of the Prouerbs, describing and as it were painting out the properties, not of a mean woman: but of a noble



## dedicatory.

ble mans vvife and a vertuous Lady,  
among other excellent qualities that  
such a vvomā ought to haue. He saith.  
She opēeth her mouth vvith vvisdōe,  
and in her tung is the lauve of grace.  
But lest I should passe the competent  
boūds of an Epistle: I vvil bre:fly note  
the Book, the Chapter and the Verse  
of diuers other places, vvhere God him  
self by his holy vvord plainly teacheth  
that all men, yea, men, vvomen and  
children, ought to be diligently exer-  
cised in the vvord of God, as the onely  
vvay to eternall life and the Ladder  
of Heauen.

Deut. .6. ver. 6 .7. Deut. 8. ver. 3.  
Deut. 11. ver. 18, 19, 20. Deut. 31, ver  
11. 12. Iosua. 8 ver. 35. 1. Reg. 22. ver. 5.  
2. Reg. 23. ver. 2. 2. Esd. 8. ver. 3. 18. ibi.  
9. ver. 2. 3. Psal. 1. ver. 3. Psal. 19. ver. 7.  
Psal. 36. ver 31 .32. Psal. 119. Pro. 1. ver  
1. 2. 3. 4. Pro. 2. ver. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 9.  
Pro. 4. ver. 20, 21. 22. Pro. 6.  
B. ij. ver.

## The Epistle.

ver. 23. ibi. 7. ver. 1, 2, 3. ibi. 8. ver. 9.  
ibi. 28. ver. 9. Esay. 8. ver. 19. 20. E-  
say. 29. ver. 19. Esa. 34. ver. 16. Esay.  
48. ver. 16. Esa. 59. ver. 21. Eccle.  
24. all. Eccle. 39. ver. 1. Mat. 4.  
Mar. 12. ver. 24. Lu. 16 ver. 29. Iho.  
5. ver. 39. 47. Iho. 8. ver. 43. Iho. 15.  
ver. 3. 7. Act. 11. ver. 1. 14. Act. 13. ve.  
26. 46. Act. 26. ver. 2. 3. Rom. 10.  
ver. 8. 17. Rom. 15. ver. 4. 1. Cor.  
10. ver. 11. 2. Cor. 1. ver. 13. Ephe.  
3. ver. 1. Thesa. 4. ver. 18.  
Phil. 2. ver. 16. Collo. 3. ver.  
16. 2. Timothe. 3 ver. 15. 16.  
Ia. 1. ver. 18. 20. 1. Pet. 1.  
ver 23. 1. Pet. 2. ver. 8. 2. Pet.  
ver 19. 1. Ioh. 2. ver .12. 13.  
14. Jude. ver. 17. Apoc. 1. ver. 3.

The very nãe of Gods vvoord ought  
to strike into our harts, great reuerẽce  
toward it, great desire to haue it,  
great haste to hear it, great loue to re-  
ad it & like care to keep it. If a Kìg or

## dedicatory.

a Queen should vwrite vnto vs, lord  
how vould vve shore vp our ea-  
res? vwhat haste should vve make to  
hear the contents? Beholde God him  
self hath directed his letters to euery  
one of vs, his owne spirite is his Se-  
cretary, his Prophets and Apostles are  
Purciuants & messengers that bring  
them vnto vs. Intollerable is the con-  
tempt of God that sendeth the, if vve  
doo not humbly read them, hear them  
and diligently mark and obserue the  
speciall points, and contents of them.  
The dredful vvoords of God doo fo-  
loue such contempt, as it is vrittē.

O turn you vnto my correction, lo  
I vvil expresse my minde vnto you,  
and make you vnderstād my vvoords.  
Seeing then that I haue called & you  
refused it, I haue stretched out my hād  
and no man regarded it, but all my  
counsel yee haue despised, and set my cor-  
rections at nought: therfore shall I  
also



## The Epistle.

also laugh in your destruction &c.  
VVhat promise can be sweeter, then  
to haue God expresse his minde vnto  
vs, and make vs understand his  
vvord? VVhat terror can be greater  
then to haue God laugh and reioice in  
our destruction. From vvich dreadful  
destruction, I beseech almighty God de-  
liuer vs, and stay vs vpon the steps of  
his holy vvord, til vve come into his  
happy kingdome.


Your La. euer to commaund,  
T. VV.

Suorum quisque Vulnerum remediū  
ex diuinis Scripturis eligat. Chri-  
stost. in act. Cap 13. Ho. 29.

¶ Let euery man chuse out of the  
diuine Scriptures, the remedy of his  
ouvn vvouñdes. These are the vvords  
of S. Iohn Chrysostom, vvriting vpon  
the 13. Chapter of the acts the 29. Ho-  
mely.

FINIS.

## To the Reader.

 I am not ignorant that as well this, as many other books which are numbered, reputed and printed among the workes of Augustine Bishop of Hippo are thought of māy not to be his, wher in as I mean not to contend, but regarding more the matter thē the man, and also finding the same among the rest of his works not only in the later editions but in the prints of such olde tīc as hardly cā be red but of those which are vsed to read antiquities, wherof I my selfe haue one to shew. I thought it good therefore (leauing the censure to such  
as

To the Reader.

as are learned) to make no que  
stiōtherof, specially seeing this  
Ladder of Paradise long be  
fore the time of Augustine  
was set vp by Christe Iesus for  
his chosen and elected children  
to ascend into those mantions  
which he hath prepared  
for them, not only in  
the kingdōe, but also  
in the house of  
God his  
father.





## to Paradise.

### Cap. I.



When vpon a certain day  
being occupied with  
the bodily labour of my  
hands : I had begun to  
think vpon the exercise  
of that spirituall man,  
four spirituall steps suddenly offered the  
self vnto my minde , as I thought there-  
on, namely reading, meditation, pray-  
er and cōtemplation. This is the Lad-  
der of those that be religious, by which  
they are lifted vp frō the earth in to He-  
uen. This ladder is parted in to fewe  
steps, notwithstanding it is of vnmesu-  
rable and incredible greatnes, whose lo-  
wer part resting vpon the earth, the vpper  
end perceth the clouds and sercheth  
out the secrets of Heauen.

These degrees as they are in names  
and number diuers: so are they distinct  
in order and worthines, if any man do  
diligently bebolde their properties, and  
their seuerall offices , what they work  
concerning vs, how they differ and haue  
the prebeminence one of a nother, what  
soeuer labour or study hee shall spend  
therin, they shall repute the same but

## The Ladder

Reading  
not of fa-  
bles but of  
Scripture.

Prayer is  
not to fa-  
bles but  
to God.

Short, and easy in comparisō of the great  
profit and sweetnes therof.

Reading is a looking vpon the Scrip-  
ture with a diligent intention of the  
minde. Meditation is a studious action  
of the minde, searching out by drift of  
proper reason, the knowledge of hidden  
trueth. Prayer is a deuout bending of  
the hart vnto God, for the putting a-  
way those things that are euil, and ob-  
taining those things that are good. Con-  
templation is a certain lifting vp of the  
minde depending vpon God, tasting  
the Joyes of euerlasting sweetnes.

The discription of the offices of  
the foure degrees or steps.

Cap. 2.



The discription of the foure de-  
grees, then beeing set forth,  
There resteth y we beholde  
their offices. Reading seeketh,  
Meditatō findeth, Prayer re-

Christes  
wordes ex-  
pounded by  
S. August-  
tin.  
Math. 7.  
ver. 7, 8.

questeth, Contēplation taketh the taste,  
wherof the Lord him self saith: seek and  
ye shall finde, knock and it shall be ope-  
ned vnto you. Seek by reading and  
you shall finde by meditation.

Knock

## to Paradise.

Knock by praying, and it shall be opened vnto you by contemplation. Reading doth as it were apply substantiall meat vnto the mouth, Meditation doth chew it and break it, Prayer obtayneth the sweetnes of it. Contemplation is the sweetnes it self which delighteth and refresheth. Reading is in the skin, Meditation is the fat, Prayer is the motion of the desire, Contemplation is the pleasure of the sweetnes obtained, whiche thing that yet it may more manifestly appere among many: I will set down one exāple. In reading I heard. Blessed are the pure in hert for they shall see God. Beholde here a short word but sweet and manifolde in sence, and giueth vnto the feeding of the soule as it were of a Grape, which after the soule hath diligently beuod, it sayeth within it self: I will return vnto my hart, and I will proue if perhaps I can vnderstand and finde out this puritie.

This thing no doubt is precious, and worthy to be desired, whose possessors are called blessed, vnto which the light of God, which is eternall life is promised, which is so greatly commended with  
so



## The Ladder

so many testimonies of y<sup>e</sup> holy scripture.

The hart then desirous to haue this thing yet more fully to be vnfolded: be-  
ginneeth to chaw & to break this grape,  
and putteth it into the presse whil'et it  
sturreth by reason to search whether it  
be so, and how this p<sup>re</sup>cious puritie so  
wo<sup>o</sup>thy to be desired, may be attayned.

The office of meditation.

Cap. 3.

**T**hen diligent meditation draw-  
ing neer, she tarieth not without,  
she hath nothing to do in the out-  
side of the letter, she setteth fast her foot,  
she perceith the inward partes, she see-  
keth out euery corner attentiuely, she  
considereth that he said not, blessed are  
the cleane in body: but y<sup>e</sup> pure in minde,  
because it suffiseth not to haue innocent  
hands frō euil acts, except we be also pu-  
rified in minde from wicked thoughts,  
which thing is confirmed by the autho-  
ritie of the Propbet, saying. VVho  
shall goe vp into the hill of the Lord:  
who shall rest in his holy place? hee  
that is innocent of his hands and of a  
cleane hart, And doeth againe consider  
how

## to Paradise.

how greatly the same Prophet doth  
wish for this cleanness of hart, praiſing thus.  
Create O Lord a new hart within me.  
And again. If I haue beheld iniquitie in  
my hart, the Lord wil not hear me.

And thinke how careful blessed Iob was in  
this watch, who said. I haue made a  
couenāt with mine eyes, that I would  
not once think vpon a Virgin. Be-  
holde how this holy man restrained  
him self, which closed vp his eyes lest  
he should beholde vanitie, lest perhap  
he should rashly beholde that which he  
might after against his wil desire

After meditation hath banded suche  
things touching the puritie of the hart:  
then she beginneth to muse vpon the re-  
ward, how glorio<sup>s</sup> & delectable a thing

it is to see the desired face of the Lord, The face of  
that excellēt face, in fauour far passing Christe can  
the children of men, not now abiect and not be hid  
vile, not hauing now the countenance as when his  
in which his mother clothed him, but Mother  
hauing on the long garment of immor- sought him  
talitie, crowned with the diadem with not his bo-  
which his Father crowned him in the dy vpon  
day of his resurrection, and glory in the earth with  
day which the Lord hath made. out the glori-  
e thereof.

Medi-  
tation

## *The Ladder*

fation thinketh, how in that sight there  
shall be the fulnes wherof the Prophet  
speaketh. VVe shalbe satisfied when  
thy glory shal appeer. Dost thou not see  
what abundance of licour hath flowed  
out of a litle Grape: how great a fire is  
growen out of this one spark: how far  
this litle lump (Blessed are the pure in  
hart for they shall see God) is stret-  
ched out in this meditation. But how  
far think you might the same be exten-  
ded, if some man should come in place  
which had good experience of such mat-  
ters: for I perceiue that a very deep wel  
it is, but I being unskilful in these mat-  
ters, haue scarcely found the bucket to  
drawe out very few things. The soule  
being enflamed with these burning tor-  
ches, and mortified with these desires,  
the alabaster of the sweet ointment bee-  
ing broken: it beginneth sweetly to sa-  
uour, not as by taste: but as it were by  
smelling at the nose. Herof the Soule  
doth gather, how sweet a thing it were  
to feele the frute of this meditation. the  
meditation wherof shee findeth to be so  
plesant. But what shall the soule doe: she  
burneth with desire to obtain, yet she  
findeth




## to Paradise

findeth not with her self how it may be  
had, & the more she seeketh: the more  
she thirsteth, and while she applyeth  
meditation therunto: she dooth but en-  
crease the pain, because the soule seeketh  
not the sweetnes which meditation dooth  
not give her, but sheweth her to be in  
puritie of the hart, for it lyeth not in  
him that readeth or meditateth to feele  
this sweetnes: except it be given him  
from above, for to read and to meditate  
is a thing common both to good and e-  
uill men, for the very philosophers of the  
heathen did finde out by dykt of reaso,  
wherin the effect of the true good thing  
did consist. But because when they  
knew God: they did not glorify him as  
G O D, but presuming of their owne  
strength said, our owne tongue wil wee  
magnify, our owne lips be of our selues,  
they were not worthy to feele y things  
they could see, but waxed full of vanities  
in their imaginations, & their wisdome  
was consumed. For that wisdome, hu-  
man study of learning (but not the spi-  
rite of wisdome) had given them, which  
spirite onely giueth true wisdome, I  
mean the sweet knowledge, whiche  
when

## The Ladder

When it is in any man as an inestimable sweetnes, it doth comfort & refresh him. And of this wisdome it is said.

V Visdome shall not enter in to a forward soule. This cometh of God only, even like as the Lord hath graunted the office of baptising vnto many, but the power and authoritie in baptisme, of remitting sinnes, he hath reserved vnto himself alone. Whereupon John in steed of naming Christe, by that proprietic, as by way of distinguishment, pointing to him  saith This is hee which baptiseth in the holy Ghoste

And so of him we may say, this is hee that giueth the true taste of wisdome, that maketh the pleasant sauored science of the soule, for speech is giuen to many, but wisdome vnto fewe, which y Lord deuiderh vnto whom he wil, and after what sorte it pleaseth him.

No man  
can remit  
sin. God  
hath refer-  
red it to h  
self alone.

The office of prayer.

Cap. 4.



Ow y soule seeing y she can not by her self attain the desired sweetnes of knowledge and experience & the more

the

## to Paradise.

She approcheth vnto highnes of hart, so  
 much the more God is lifted aboue her  
 reach, she humbleth her self and flyeth  
 vnto prayer, saying. O Lord thou whi-  
 ch maist not be seē but of cleane harts.  
 I haue sought by reading, I haue sear-  
 ched by meditating, how the true puri-  
 tie of hart might be obtained, y by the  
 means therof I might in part knowe  
 thee. I sought thy countenance (O Lord)  
 euen thy face did I seek. I haue long me-  
 ditated in my hart, and in my medita-  
 tion, the fire and longing to knowe thee,  
 is more & more kindled. Whilst thou  
 Lord dost break vnto me the bread of  
 holy Scripture, & in breaking of bread:  
 thou art the sower known, & the more  
 I knowe thee: y more I desire to knowe  
 thee, not now in the bark of the letter:  
 but in the feeling of experientie. Neither  
 doe I ask this (O Lord) for my merites:  
 but for thy mercies sake. For I confesse  
 that I am an vntwoythy & sinfull soule,  
 not withstanding the whelpes doe eat y  
 crumes that fall from the table of their  
 Lords. Giue me (O Lord) y earnest of the  
 enheritace to come, at the least one drop  
 of the heauenly raine, that I might cole

D.

my

Every chris-  
 tian soule  
 may say I  
 haue sought  
 by reading.

In break-  
 ing the  
 bread of ho-  
 ly scripture  
 Christe is  
 knowne.  
 Lu. 24.  
 ver. 30.

Not for  
 merits sake



## *The Ladder*

my thirst, for I burne in loue of thee.

The office of contemplation. Cap. 5.

**W**ith these and such like enflamed speeches, the soule kindleth her desire as she vtteth her affection, w<sup>th</sup> these allurements the soule calleth to her selfe, the Bridegroom Now the Lord whose eyes are set vpon the righteous, and his ears not onely open vnto their prayers: but hastily interrupting the middle course of the prayer, and speedely being compassed with the dew of heauenly grace, he meeteth with the desiring soule. And being anointed with the best ointment, he recreateth y<sup>e</sup> very soule, he refresheth the hungry & maketh fat the lean soule, causeth her to forget all worldly thinges, and being vnmindful of him self, by fortifying the soule, maketh her aloue, and by making her drunck: causeth her to be sober, and like as in certein carnall duties, the concupiscence is so overcome, that it loseth the vse of reason, and is become as it were altogether carnall. So for good cause in this heauenly contemplation, the carnall motions are so

D.y. consumed

## to Paradise.

consumed and swallowed bp of the soule,  
that the flesh doth contrary the spirit  
in nothing, and the man is made as it  
were altogether spirituall,

Signes of the holy Ghoste coming  
vnto the soule,

Cap. 6.



Lord how dost thou appéer  
when thou workest these  
thinges? what token is ther  
of thy comming? We sighes  
and teares witness and messengers of  
this ioye and consolation? If it be so, this  
is a new kinde of speech by a contrary  
meaning, and a signification out of vse.  
For what fellowship hath consolation  
with sorrowful sighes? or ioy w teares?  
If these yet ought to be called teares,  
and not rather an ouer running abun-  
dance of inward dew powred vpon the  
soule, and a token bothe of the inward  
and outward purging. What like  
as in the baptisme of children, by the  
outward washing, is signified and figu-  
red the inward washing of the scale:  
so hear the inward purging goeth be-  
fore the outward cleansing. O happy  
teares

## The Ladder

teares by which the inward blemishes of the soule are purged, by which y<sup>e</sup> kindlings of sin are quenched. Blessed are you that so mourne, because you shall laugh. In teares y<sup>e</sup> soule acknowledge thy bridegroom, embrace thy long desired one. Now make thy self drunk in the river of pleasure, suck Milk & Hunny out of the best of his consolation.

These are the pure gifts & pleasures which thy Bridegroom hath sent thee, namely, mourning and teares. With these teares he bringeth drink vnto thee by measure, these teares are thy food night and day, even the bread that maketh strong the hart of man, which are sweeter then the tonye or the hony comb.

O Lord if these teares be so exceeding sweet with the desire and remembrance of thee: how sweet shall the joy be which shall be taken by y<sup>e</sup> manifest sight of thee? If it be so sweet a thing to weep for thee: how sweet shall it be to reioyce of thee? But what doe wee go about to set forth openly the secret speeches of the soule: why go we about w<sup>th</sup> vsuall wordes to expresse y<sup>e</sup> spirituall affections? Whose which haue not the experience therof,  
vnderstand



## to Paradise

vnderſtād not any ſuch matters, whom  
the anointing it ſelfe teacheth in y<sup>e</sup> booke  
of experience, or els y<sup>e</sup> outward letter pro-  
fiteth nothing to him that readeth. Little  
god ſauour hath the reading of the out-  
ward letter, except from the hart a man  
take the expoſicion and inward ſence.

In what eſtate the ſoule remaineth  
whilſt the feruencie of the holy  
Ghoſte departeth.

Cap. 7.



**Q** Soule we haue greatly pro-  
longed this talke, for it was  
god for vs to bee heer with  
Peeter and Iohn, to beholde  
the glozy of the Bridegroom, and long  
to remain with him. But I would there  
were made heer, not three nor two ſe-  
uerall Tabernacles, but one, in which  
we might all dwell together, and Joy to-  
gether. But as the Bridegrome ſaieth.  
Let me go, for now the mornig riſeth.  
Now thou haſt receiued the viſitation  
and light of grace which thou biddeſt de-  
ſire. Wherefore the bleſſing bēing giuen  
thee, the ſinow of thy thigh beeing mo-  
tified, and thy name beeing changed

from

Gen. 32

Gen. 26.

16. ver. 25. 27

## The Ladder

from Jacob to Israel, now for a while goeth aside y<sup>e</sup> bridegrome long desired, and soon departed, he withdraweth himself as wel from the vision as from the sweetnes of contemplation, yet doth hee still remain present touching y<sup>e</sup> gouernment, the glozy and the vnite.

A reason geuē why the feruentnesse of the holy ghost dooth for a time leaue the soule.

Cap. 8.

**B**Ut feare not O spouse, despair not, neither thinke thy self to be contemned, though for a while y<sup>e</sup> bridegrōe hide his face frō thee, all these things work together for thy profit, and thou makest a gaine, bothe of his cōming and of his departure, hee cometh for thy profit, and hee also departeth for thy profit, hee cōeth to glue thee comfort, and departeth to make thee vigilant, lest the greatnes of thy consolation should puffed thee vp, lest if the bridegrome should alwaies abide with thee: y<sup>e</sup> shouldst begin to contemne thy felowes, and shouldst now attribute this continuall visitation, not to grace: but to nature, for this grace, the bridegrom

## *to Paradise.*

groom giueth to whom hee will & when  
it pleaseth him, the possession therof is  
not gotten by any right of enheritance.  
It is a cōmō saying, ouer much familiar-  
tie breedeth contempt. The bridegroom ther-  
foze departeth from thee, least being  
ouer much conuersant: hee might be  
contemned, and that being absent: he  
might be the moze desired, and being  
desired: the moze greedily sought for, &  
being long sought for: hee might be at  
the last moze thānkfully found. Further-  
moze, what is this present life: what is  
it in respect of the glozy to come which  
shall be shewed vpon vs: surely it is a  
life like a dark riddell in which wee vn-  
derstand but a small parte, for heer we  
haue no continuing Citie but we seek  
for one to come, let vs not then take our  
banishment for our countrie, nor the er-  
nest penny for the whole price. The  
Bridegrome cometh & departeth again.  
Sometime bringing consolation, some-  
time turning our whole estate into  
weaknes. A little while he suffereth vs  
to taste how sweet he is, and befoze we  
can fully feele it: hee withdroweth him-  
self and as it were flickring ouer vs  
with



## The Ladder

**Cant. 1.  
ver. 23.**

With his wings spread a broode, he proude-  
keth vs to fly, as if he should say: beholde  
you haue somewhat tasted how sweet  
I am, but if you wilbe fully satisfied  
with this my sweetnes: run after me  
into y<sup>e</sup> sweet saucour of myne ointments,  
lifting vp your hearts where I am on  
the right hand of my Father, where you  
shal see me not in a glasse or in a riddell,  
but face to face, and where your hart  
shall fully reioyce and no man shall take  
away your ioy from you.

The care & diligence of the soule,  
lest she should be forsaken  
of God. Cap. 9.

**Epo. 4.  
ver. 6.**

**W**ilt take thou heed O Spouse  
how the Bridegroom turneth  
away him self, he goeth not  
far of, and although thou see  
not him, yet dooth he see thee, beeing full  
of eyes bothe behinde and befoze, thou  
canst neuer be hidden from him. Hee  
hath also about thee his spirits, beeing  
messengers and as it were moste sharp  
sighted Spies, that they may looke how  
thou behauest thy self in y<sup>e</sup> absēce of the  
Bridegrome, & accuse thee befoze him,  
if

## to Paradise.

if they may espy any token of wantonnes & scurrilitie. For this Bridegroom is ielous, lest perhap thou shouldest accept some other louer. For if y<sup>e</sup> go about to please any other, hee forsaketh thee and toyneth him self to other y<sup>e</sup>ug ones.

This Bridegroom is a daintie fellow, he is bothe noble and rich, & of passing beautie aboue all the children of men, and therfore he disdaineth to haue any other but a beautifull Spouse. P<sup>er</sup>ea if he see in thee but one spot or wrinkle: he straight turneth away his eyes, for hee can abide no vncleennes. Bee chaste therfore, be shamesfast and humble, that so thou maist be wort<sup>hy</sup> often to be visited of thy Bridegroom. I feare lest this speech hath holden vs ouer long. But the matter both barren and sweet hath diu<sup>er</sup>uen me therunto, which I haue not voluntarily prolonged, but haue bene drawn against my wil, with I knowe not what sweetnes therof.

The office and effect of euery stall or  
step by repetiton, Cap. 10.

**T**hat these things then which haue  
been spoken more at large, may  
be  
the

## The Ladder

Reading  
the founda-  
tion.

the better be seene when they are vnited and ioyned together: let vs collect by rehersall the sum of the things before spoken, as in the former examples it may appeere to haue been noted, how the foresaid steps holde together, and how they go one before another, as frō time to time the one beeing cause of th'other. For reading, as it were the foundation, doth first offer it self, and when she hath giuen vs the substance of matter: she sendeth vs to Meditation, now Meditation very diligently enquireth what we ought to desire and as it were delving or digging, doth finde and shew where as the treasure is. But when by her self she is not able to obtain it: she sendeth vs vnto Prayer, Prayer lifteth vp her self with all her force whē she hath found the desired treasure, the sweetness of Contemplation. This Contemplation cometh to, doth fully reward y<sup>e</sup> labo<sup>r</sup> of those three before named, while she maketh the thirsty soule drunke w<sup>th</sup> the dew of heavenly sweetness. Reading then pertaineth to outward exercise, Meditation to the inward vnderstanding, Prayer to the desire of the minde. Contemplation



## to Paradise.

is aboue all feeling of humain reason.  
The first step is of those that doe begin.  
The second of those that doe go forward.  
The third of those that are deuout. The  
fourth of those which are blessed or hap-  
pye. These foure steps are so linckt to-  
gether, and doe so by course serue one an-  
others turn y<sup>e</sup> they which go befoze with-  
out them that follow can profit little or  
nothing, and they which follow without  
them that go befoze doe profit seldom or  
never. For what doth it bauntage to  
spend the time in continual reading, or  
by reading to run through the Acts and  
writings of holy men, except by chat-  
ing and feeding vpon the same: wee  
drinke down the soice therof, and by swa-  
llowing therof, wee send it into the inner  
moste parte of the hart, that of those  
things we may haue diligent considera-  
tion of our owne estate, and endeavour  
our selues to doe y<sup>e</sup> works of them whose  
acts we often desire to read. But how  
can we consider of these things, or how  
can we beware least by meditating,  
some false and vaine things, should passe  
the bounds, constituted by those holy  
Fathers, except first we be instructed a-

He that will  
not set his  
foot vpon y<sup>e</sup>  
first Step  
shall neuer  
come vp to  
the last.

## The Ladder

Hearing is  
included in  
reading.

both such matters, either by reading or by hearing. For hearing both after a certain manner pertain to reading. Whereof we use to say that we have not onely read those booke which we our selues doe read vnto our selues or to other: but also those which we haue heard of our Maistere.

Jam. 1. 17.

Without  
whome we  
can do no-  
thing saith  
S. Augu-  
stine, & also  
Christe him-  
selfe.

Joh. 6. v. 5

God by his  
grace ma-  
keth vs fre  
ly to chose  
that which  
is good.

Further what doth it profit if by Me-  
ditatio a man doe see what things ought  
to be done, except by the help of prayer  
and the grace of God, we may be made  
able to obtain y<sup>e</sup> same. For euery good  
gift (saith Saint Iames) and euery per-  
fect gift descendeth from aboue from  
the father of light. Without whom we  
can doe nothing, but he in vs doth worke  
our worke, yet not altogether with out  
vs, for wee are workers with God, as  
the Apostle saith, God surely wil haue  
vs pray vnto him, and that we doe open  
vnto him, comming and tarying at the  
dore, the besome of our will, and that  
we consent vnto him.

This consent he required of the wo-  
man of Samaria, when he said, call thy  
husband I wil poure grace into thee ap-  
ply y<sup>e</sup> fre choice. He required prayer of  
her

to Paradise.

her, when he said. If thou knewest the Joh. 4. v. 10  
gift of God & who it is that saith vnto  
thee, giue me drink: perhaps thou  
wouldst haue desired of him the water  
of life. The woman whē she heard this  
being instructed as it were of reading:  
she thought in her hart that it would be  
good and profitable for her to haue this  
water. She then being kindled with a  
desire to obtain it: turned her self vnto Joh. 4. v. 15.  
prayer saying. O Lord giue me this  
vvater that I may thirst nomore, nei-  
ther at any time come hither again to  
drawe any water.

Beholde the hearing of the word of  
the Lord and Meditation following ther  
vpon, haue prouoked her vnto prayer.  
For how could she be carefully bent vnto  
prayer: except Meditation had first  
kindled her. And what should Medita-  
tion going before haue profited her?  
except prayer following had obtained  
those things, whiche Meditation did  
shewe worthy to be desired. Therefore  
that Meditation may be frutesful: it be-  
cometh y<sup>e</sup> deuotion of Prayer to fol-  
lowe, whose frute and as it were the ef-  
fect, is the sweetnes of Contemplation.  
All



## The Ladder

All these steps or degrees are declared  
to be ioyned together that they  
are inseperable. Cap. II.

Meditati:  
on without  
reading is  
erronious.



By these we may gather that  
reading without Meditaci  
on is saples. Meditation  
without reding is erroneus.  
Prayer without Meditation is neither  
hote nor colde. Meditaciō without Pray  
er is fruteles. Prayer with deuocion  
is it that obtaineth Contēplation. The  
obtayning of Contemplation without  
Prayer, is either rare or miraculous.  
For GOD of whose power there is nei  
ther number nor end, and whose mer  
cie is a bove all his works, sometime of  
stones may raise vp sonnes vnto Abra  
ham. While he compelleth those which  
be hard harted and vnwilling, quietly  
to agree and to be willing.

And so like the prodigall sonne as the  
common saying is. He draweth the Dr  
by the bozne, when hee powzeth in him  
self not being required. Which thing  
although sometime we reade to haue  
happened vnto some, as vnto Paule  
and certain other, yet ought wee not to  
presume

## to Paradise.

presume of such diuine things, but rather to do that which is our dutie, that is to say, to read and to meditate in the lawe of God, to pray and to loue him, that it may please him to beholde our imperfection, and to help our infirmities, which things he teacheth vs to do, saying

Ask and yee shall receiue, seek and yee shall finde, knock and it shall be

Mat. 7. 7. 8

opened vnto you. For now the Kingdome of heauen suffereth violence, and those that be violent pluck it vnto them.

Mat. 11. 12.

Beholde whether the properties of the foresaid steps, may be made perfect with conuenient distinctions, how fast they cleue one to the other, and what ebery one of them dooth work in vs.

Blessed is the man whose minde being bold of others affaires, dooth alwayes desire on these steps to be conuersant, which selling all that he hath, dooth buy that feld in which this desired treasure lieth hid. For beholde and see how sweet the Lord is.

He that in the first degree is exercised, in the second circumspect, in the third deuout, in the fourth lifted vp aboue him self: by these ascencions which  
be

## The Ladder

**psa. 84. v. 7** he hath disposed in his hart, he doth rise from vertue to vertue, vntil the Lord of Lords apper in Sion. Blessed is he to whō it is granted to remain, but euen a little while vpon this highest step, for he may truly say. beholde I feele the grace of the Lord, beholde with Peeter and Iohn I doo contemplate. Beholde with Iacob I doo often take delight in the embrasing of Rachell, but let this person take good heed to him self, least after this Contemplation by which he hath been lifted vp to the beaueus, by any inordinate hap he fall vnto y<sup>e</sup> depth of hell, and least after the sight of God he be conuerted vnto the wanton actiōs of the world, and the enticing pleasures of the flethe, for when the weak sight of mans minde is not able long to sustaine the brightnes of the true light: let him softly and orderly descend vnto some one of the thre steps by which he had ascended, and by course let him stay, now vpon one, now vpon another, some time vpon y<sup>e</sup> third as he listeth him self to chuse, and as time & place shall require. And loke how much the higher he moueth aboue the first step: so much the nearer



## to Paradise.

nearer he draweth vnto God. But alas how fragile and miserable is the condition of man, beholde by discourse of reason, and by the Testimonies of the holy scripture we plainly see y in these foure steps, the perfection of a good life is contained, and in these spiritnall good things a mans exercise ought to be contained. But who is he that doth it and we will praise him. To wil is present w many, but to perfoyme it: with few, and I pray God that we may be of those few.

Foure causes doo withdrawe vs  
from these foure steps.

Cap. .12.

**T**here are yet foure Causes which withdrawe vs often from these foure steps, that is to say, ineuitable necessitie, of honest action the vtilitie, humayne infirmities: & worldly vanities.

The first is excusable. The second is tollerable, The third miserable. And the fourth damnable. For it had bene better for them whome such cause pulleth away from their holy purpose, not to knowe the glozy of God then to toun-  
C. bac.

## The Ladder

backwarde after they haue knowne it.  
What excuse can he make of his office?  
for iustly the Lord may say vnto him.

What could I more haue doon for thee then I haue doon? thou hadst no being and I created thee, thou diddest commit sinne and madest thy self the seruauent of the Deuill and I redeemed thee, thou diddest run at randon ouer the world with the wicked, and I elected thee, I gaue thee grace in my sight and would haue dwelt with thee, but thou haste despised me, thou haste throwne behynde thee (not onely my wordes) but my self also, and halt walked after thine owne lustes.

But o good, sweet, and pitifull GOD, a delectable frend, apudent counseller, a mighty helper, how vaine and vaineles is he that casteth thee away, which driueth from his hart so mylde & make a guest? O how unhappy and hurtfull a chaunge is this, to cast away his creator, to take in frewarde and noysome thoughts, and to deliuer by y secret place of his hart, euen the priuie closet of the holy ghoste, which now erewhile was filled with celestall joyes, so suddenly to

## to Paradise.

to be trodden vnder foote with vnclene  
thoughts and wicked finnes, euen yet  
therin the very steps of the bridegrome  
are warme and now presently are intro-  
mitted & let in the adulterous desires,  
a soule absurd disorder, that the eares  
which euen now haue heard the words  
which are not lawfull for a man to vt-  
ter, so sone to be enclined to the hearing  
of slaunders and fables, that the eyes  
which euen now were baptised with ho-  
ly teares, suddenly to be turned vnto the  
beholding of vanities, that the tounge  
which euen now did sing the pleasant  
song of the holy bride bed, which recon- Can. x. v. 11.  
ciled with his enflamed eloquence of per-  
suasion, the bride with the bridegrome  
and brought her into the wine seller:  
shoulde againe be conuerted vnto vaine  
speeches, to filthy iesting, to the practi-  
sing of deceit, and vnto slaunders. Farre  
be it from vs (o Lord) but if it happen by  
humane infirmitie that we slip in to a-  
ny such offence, let vs not therfore des-  
paire: but let vs run againe vnto the pi-  
tifuall Phisition which raiseth the poore  
from the earthe, and lifteth vp the nee-  
de from the dūghill, and he that willet  
not



## *The Ladder*

not the death of a sinner: Shall agayne  
cure and heale vs.

It is now time to cōclude this Epistle.  
Let vs therfore pray vnto God presently  
to mittigate the impediments which do  
witholde vs from his Contemplation,  
and hereafter to take them cleane away  
from vs, whome we desire to lead vs by  
the foresaid steps from vertue to vertue,  
til we may see the God of Gods in Sio,  
where the elected (not by drops nor by  
course) shall taste y<sup>e</sup> sweetnes of deuine  
Contemplation: but shall haue the Joy  
of being filled without seasing with the  
Riuer of Pleasure, which no man shall  
take from them, and shall enioy vn-  
changeable Peace, even  
Peace in it self.



*The end of S. Augustine  
Bishop of Hippo, his Lad-  
der to Paradise.*

